

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1 1. A method for producing a scratch-off lottery ticket, the method comprising:
2 causing a plurality of symbols to be printed in a play area of a lottery ticket,
3 each of the symbols being printed adjacent to at least one other
4 symbol,
5 wherein at least one set of play symbols forms a potentially
6 continuous path that spans the play area; and
7 causing a plurality of links to be printed within the play area,
8 each link being printed between at least two symbols,
9 wherein at least one set of links is printed between the symbols that
10 form the potentially continuous path,
11 wherein at least at least two adjacent symbols do not have a link
12 printed between them, and
13 further wherein any one of the play symbols is selectable at the start of a game of
14 the lottery ticket.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 causing at least one void symbol to be printed as part of at least one of the at least
3 one potentially continuous paths formed by the at least one set of symbols, thereby
4 causing the at least one potentially continuous path that includes the void symbol
5 to be a non-continuous path and thereby causing the other potentially continuous
6 paths to be continuous paths.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
2 causing each of the plurality of symbols, including the at least one void
3 symbol, to be covered with a latex covering; and
4 causing each of the links to remain uncovered, thereby rendering the at least one
5 non-continuous path to be undifferentiable from the potentially continuous paths
6 until the latex covering is removed from the symbols forming a potentially
7 continuous path.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein at least one of the continuous paths is
2 associated with a prize.

1 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the at least one of the continuous paths that is
2 associated with a prize is a continuous path that includes less than a predetermined
3 number of symbols.

6. The method of claim 4, wherein a first prize is associated with a first continuous path that includes a first number of symbols and a second prize is associated with a second continuous path that includes a second number of symbols.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the first prize is more valuable than the second
2 prize and wherein the first number is less than the second number.

1 8. A computer readable medium encoded with instructions for directing a
2 processor to:
3 perform the method of claim 1.

1 9. An apparatus for creating a scratch-off lottery ticket, comprising:
2 a processor, and
3 a storage device that stores a program for directing the processor;
4 the processor being operative with the program to:
5 perform the method of claim 1.

1 10. A method for creating a scratch-off lottery ticket, the method comprising:
2 printing, on a scratch-off lottery ticket, a plurality of nodes in a pattern
3 spanning a play area of the ticket;
4 printing a plurality of links between the nodes in the play area of the ticket,
5 such that the plurality of nodes and the plurality of links together form a plurality
6 of paths between a first section of the play area and a second section of the play
7 area,
8 wherein at least two nodes that are adjacent to one another do not
9 have a link printed between them, and
10 further wherein any one of the nodes is selectable at the start of a game of the
11 lottery ticket.

1 11. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
2 printing at least one symbol within each node
3 wherein at least one of the
4 symbols is a symbol that indicates a discontinuity in at least one of the paths.

1 12. The method of claim 11, wherein printing at least one symbol within each
2 node comprises:
3 printing at least one bar code within each node.

1 13. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
2 covering each of the nodes with a scratch-off material, such that the plurality of
3 links remain uncovered.

1 14. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
2 causing an indication of prizes to be printed on the ticket, wherein a first prize is
3 associated with a first a first path formed by the nodes and a second prize is
4 associated with a second prize formed by the nodes.

1 15. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
2 causing an indication of at two prizes to be printed on the ticket, wherein a prize of
3 a first value is associated with a first path formed by the nodes and a second prize
4 of a second value is associated with a second path formed by the nodes, the first
5 value being greater than the second value.

1 16. The method of claim 15, wherein
2 each node includes within it at least one symbol, and
3 the first path corresponds to a first efficiency of play and the second path
4 corresponds to a second efficiency of play,
5 efficiency of play being determined by dividing a number of a predetermined
6 symbol included in the path by a total number of symbols included in the path.

1 17. A computer readable medium encoded with instructions for directing a
2 processor to:
3 perform the method of claim 10.

1 18. An apparatus for creating a scratch-off lottery ticket, comprising:
2 a processor, and
3 a storage device that stores a program for directing the processor;
4 the processor being operative with the program to:
5 perform the method of claim 10.

1 19. A method for facilitating play of a simulated scratch-lottery ticket on an
2 electronic device, comprising:
3 generating a pattern of nodes in a play area of the simulated scratch-lottery
4 ticket,
5 the pattern of nodes forming a plurality of available paths from the
6 first section of the play area to a second section of the play area,
7 at least one of the nodes having including at least one symbol within
8 a perimeter of the node
9 wherein at least two nodes in the pattern that are adjacent to one
10 another do not together form a portion of an available path, and
11 further wherein any one of the nodes is selectable at the start of a
12 game of the lottery ticket; and
13 causing the at least one symbol within a perimeter of a node to be concealed from
14 view until a signal indicating a selection of the node by a player is determined.

1 20. The method of claim 19, wherein the pattern of nodes further comprises links
2 between the nodes, each link indicating a connection of one node to another node
3 in one of the available paths and wherein at least two nodes that are adjacent to one
4 another in the pattern are not connected by a link.

1 21. The method of claim 20, making the generated pattern available for download
2 to an electronic device.

1 22. The method of claim 20, further comprising:
2 receiving an indication that a player has completed a game comprising the
3 generated pattern of nodes; and
4 determining whether the player is eligible for a prize based on a result of the game.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein determining whether the player is eligible for a prize comprises:

- determining whether the player has selected a set of nodes in the pattern that form a path from the first section of the play area to the second section of the play area, thereby determining whether the player has revealed a path that potentially qualifies for a prize;
- if the player has selected a path that potentially qualifies for a prize, determining whether the path includes less than a predetermined number of nodes;
- and
- causing a prize to be provided to the player if the path includes less than the predetermined number of nodes.

24. The method of claim 22, further comprising:

- determining an efficiency of play of the player by
- determining a number of a predetermined symbol included in the path selected by the player,
- determining a number of nodes included in the path, and
- dividing the number of the predetermined symbol by the number of nodes.

1 25. The method of claim 24, further comprising:
2 causing a first prize to be provided to the player if the efficiency of play is a
3 first efficiency and causing a second prize to be provided to the player if the
4 efficiency of play is a second efficiency, wherein the first efficiency is greater than
5 the second efficiency.

- 1 26. A method for facilitating play of a simulated scratch-off lottery ticket on an
2 electronic device, comprising:
3 reading data that defines a pattern of nodes spanning a play area of the
4 simulated scratch-off lottery ticket, the pattern defining a plurality of paths
5 between a first section of the play area and a second section of the play area,
6 wherein each path of the plurality of paths is defined by links
7 between adjacent nodes,
8 wherein at least two of the nodes that are adjacent to one another do
9 not include a link between them,
10 wherein at least one of the nodes is associated with at least one
11 symbol, the at least one symbol not being made visible from a predetermined
12 viewing perspective until a signal indicating selection of the node associated with
13 the symbol is received; and
14 outputting the data on a display,
15 wherein the links defining the paths are visible from the predetermined viewing
16 perspective from the time the data is initially output.
- 1 27. The method of claim 26, further comprising:
2 receiving a signal indicating a selection of a node; and
3 causing the at least one symbol associated with the node to be made visible from
4 the predetermined viewing perspective.
- 1 28. The method of claim 26, further comprising:
2 determining that an attempt to win a prize associated with the data has
3 ended; and
4 determining whether the attempt has been successful.
- 1 29. The method of claim 28, wherein determining whether the attempt has been
2 successful comprises:
3 determining whether a set of nodes forming a path from the first section of the play
4 area to the second section of the play area has been selected.

1 30. The method of claim 29, wherein determining whether the attempt has been
2 successful further comprises:
3 determining whether the set of nodes forming a path comprises less than a
4 predetermined number of nodes.

1 31. The method of claim 29, wherein determining whether the attempt has been
2 successful further comprises:
3 determining whether the set of nodes forming the path includes at least a
4 predetermined number of a predetermined symbol.

1 32. A computer readable medium encoded with instructions for directing a
2 processor to:
3 perform the method of claim 26.

1 33. An apparatus for creating a scratch-off lottery ticket, comprising:
2 a processor, and
3 a storage device that stores a program for directing the processor;
4 the processor being operative with the program to:
5 perform the method of claim 26.